

Child Support News You Can Use

www.mass.gov/cse

Fall 2005

New Features Added To Our Online Case Manager

The Child Support Enforcement Division of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) has expanded the case information available to customers through its online Case Manager at www.mass.gov/cse. DOR has also implemented new password features that will enhance the security of your account and make it easier for you to reset your password if you forget it.

Some of you may already have noticed that you are now prompted to enter your e-mail address and cell phone information before you can access the Case Manager. If you don't have a cell phone, simply check off the box that indicates "Cell Phone Number Not Available." However, you must provide DOR with a valid e-mail address before you can access the Case Manager. If you do not have an e-mail address, there are thousands of providers, such as yahoo.com or hotmail.com, who offer free e-mail accounts.

Besides providing DOR with another means of staying in contact with you, your e-mail address serves another important purpose. Many of you voiced concerns over the length of time it took to have your password reset so we have streamlined the process and made it easier. You will be asked to select a "security hint" question such as "What was the name of your first pet?" If

you forget your password, you will be asked to answer the security hint question you selected. If you answer the question correctly, your password reset information will be sent right away to the e-mail address you registered with us. This process is much quicker than the old reset process (which could take several days) and offers you increased protection for your password information.

Once you provide your e-mail address and choose your security hint question, you will be ready to view your case information. You will notice that we now provide more information. You can view your court order amount and the frequency with which it is due. Balance information has been broken down so that you can view the different balances owed on your case including arrears, interest, penalties, and any fees. Within a few weeks, you will also be able to see the source of any payments issued (e.g., from a parent's employer or from a DOR enforcement action), and each payment's status (cached, outstanding, etc.). Also, your payment history information will be expanded so that you can view up to four years' worth of support payments.

DOR strives continually to improve the services we offer and the delivery of those services to you. We hope that you find the new features on our website useful and encourage you to visit and use our online Case Manager at www.mass.gov/cse.

Modification of Your Support Order

You can ask DOR to assist you in going to court to ask for a modification of your child support order. Only the court can change the amount of your order and it will use the Massachusetts Child Support Guidelines in determining the amount of the child support order. The Guidelines consider several factors including both parents' income and ability to earn income, the ages of your children, and the cost of health care coverage for the children.

To get an estimate of the amount of money a court may order for child support, you can use the worksheet on our website at www.cse.state.ma.us/parents/Calc2.htm.

If you want to ask the court to review your order, you can call us for the forms you'll need or get them online at our website.

Faxing Us?

If you are faxing information to DOR, remember to include proper identification. You must include your Social Security number and Personal Identification Number (PIN) on the fax cover sheet or first page so that your paperwork can be processed quickly and given to the correct case owner. Our regional offices receive a high volume of faxes each day and including your Social Security and PIN will help save time and ensure your case is reviewed faster.

Reminder About Child Support Due **WEEKLY**...

DOR bills every Friday when child support is due weekly. If you pay child support on a weekly basis directly to DOR, THE AMOUNT DUE FOR THE MONTH IS DETERMINED BY THE NUMBER OF FRIDAYS IN THE MONTH.

For example, if your order is \$100 per week and there are four Fridays in the month, the total monthly amount due for current child support is \$400. If there are five Fridays in the month, the total monthly amount due for current child support is \$500. This does not mean you are making an extra payment.

September and December of 2005, and March and June of 2006 all have five Fridays and if you pay child support weekly, you must make five payments in those months.

(Please note: If your employer deducts child support from your paycheck, your employer sends the payments to DOR based on the payroll cycle.)

Parents Paying Support: You Can Now Pay Online!

DOR has partnered with ACS State & Local Solutions, Inc. (ACS) to make available their *ExpertPay*SM program which gives parents paying support and their employers the option to make child support payments online via a secure website www.expertpay.com. With *ExpertPay*SM, you can choose to make a one-time payment or set up a recurring payment. The payment will be drawn directly from your checking or savings account; all you need to do is complete the fast and easy *ExpertPay*SM registration process. Best of all, there is no fee when you pay from your checking or savings account!

Need to make a payment and don't have the funds available in your checking or savings account? You can also make a one-time payment online using your MasterCard®. (Currently, *ExpertPay*SM can accept credit card payments made from MasterCard® only but is working with Visa® and Discover® to include these two in the near future). Please note that there is a 2% transaction fee charged when you make a payment by credit card with *ExpertPay*SM.

Visit our website at www.mass.gov/cse for more information regarding *ExpertPay*SM.